UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Mr. Mohr

DATE: December 20, 1963

FROM : C. D. DeLoach

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF THE PRESIDENT

Pursuant to the Director's instructions, I met with Senator Richard B. Russell (D-Ga.) at 3:45 p.m. Inspector Jim Malley accompanied me.

I told the Senator that the Director probably had the greatest respect for him than any other man on the Presidential Commission; consequently, the Director was most anxious that any misimpression which the Senator might have gotten, regarding leaks concerning the captioned matter, be straightened out immediately. I mentioned that the Director had maintained throughout that there should be no press release unless it emanated from either the President or either the Presidential Commission. I told Senator Russell that the Director had issued specific instructions that no information be given from the FBI and that we had religiously adhered to these instructions. I told him also that there had been others who thought that a press release, based upon the FBI report, should be issued immediately. I reiterated that under no circumstances had we "leaked" any information; however, we certainly knew that it had been coming from other sources.

The Senator inquired as to the identity of the sources who had been "leaking" information. I told him it appeared quite obvious that considerable of the information came from the Dallas Police who had received the results of our Laboratory and Identification examinations. He stated he recognized this fact. I told him also that the Department undoubtedly had "leaked" considerable information as it was quite apparent that a number of their "favorites" had carried rather lengthy articles concerning information contained in the FBI report.

Senator Russell told Mr. Malley and me that he was glad to hear an FBI denial in this matter. He stated that Deputy Attorney General Katzenbach had directly implied that the "leaks" had come from the FBI. He quoted Katzenbach as telling the members of the Presidential Commission, "J. Edgar Hoover has chewed his men out for leaking information and they won't be doing any more of this." I told the Senator that Katzenbach was obviously lying in implying such action on the part of FBI representatives. The point was made that sometimes a person tries to cover up his own guilt by blaming others.

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This certainly shows Katzenbach's true colors.

1 - Mr. Belmont
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Sullivan
1 - Mr. Evans
1 - Mr. Malley
1 - Mr. Jones
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Senator Russell was told that we would, of course, be glad to be of assistance to him on an informal basis in connection with the inquiry by the Presidential Commission. He was advised that Inspector Malley had been appointed by the Director to serve as liaison man with Lee Rankin, the Chief Counsel, and that Malley also would be at his disposal any time service was needed. The Senator confided that he had argued with the President about being appointed to the Presidential Commission. He stated the President had called him early one afternoon to advise that he was being appointed to this Commission. Senator Russell told the President that he could not take the appointment, that he considered this to be somewhat of a nasty job. The President then asked Senator Russell if he would recommend any member of the Supreme Court. Senator Russell stated that he didn't know a single member of the Supreme Court he would recommend for anything. The President called Senator Russell back early in the evening of the same day and named the members of the Presidential Commission. When he came to the Senator's name, the Senator stopped him and told him again that he couldn't be on the Commission. The President told Senator Russell that he had already issued a press release reflecting that he was a member. The Senator stated his hands were, therefore, tied and there was nothing he could do about the matter. He added it was very distasteful to him, however, to serve on the same Commission as Chief Justice Warren inasmuch as he had no respect for Warren.

We discussed a number of mutual interests in the State of Georgia before leaving. The Senator is driving home tonight and plans to take the FBI report with him. He has not yet had a chance to read it. He stated that upon his return, he would call if any questions whatsoever arose regarding the problems of the Presidential Commission.

ACTION:

For record purposes.